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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of interest to USDA management

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COMMISSIONERS

DR. JOAN WALLACE SWORN IN AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION.....

Dr. Joan Wallace was sworn in as USDA's Assistant Secretary for Administration by Secretary Bergland in a ceremony in the patio Friday December 2, 1977. She thus became the first woman to hold this position and the first black appointed to the Assistant Secretary level in USDA history. The Secretary, in his remarks, stressed that Dr. Wallace was selected for this important position on the basis of her ability and merit and her experience in dealing with people.

Dr. Wallace was born in Chicago. She obtained her bachelors degree in sociology from Bradley, her masters from Columbia and her Ph.D. in social psychology from Northwestern. She also completed training at the Harvard Business School's Institute for Educational Management.

Most recently, Dr. Wallace has been director of the School of Social Work at Western Michigan. Prior to that, she was vice-president of Morgan State where she had responsibility for community affairs, public information, affirmative action, federal relations, institutional development, alumni affairs and administration.

From 1975 to 1976, Dr. Wallace, while on leave from Howard University, was deputy executive director of programs for the National Urban League. She was associate dean of the Howard University School of Social Work from 1973 to 1975. From 1967 to 1973, Dr. Wallace was an assistant professor, then associate professor and director of undergraduate social work at the University of Illinois.

Dr. Wallace has written a number of publications and reports and has been a consultant to a dozen institutions and organizations.

FRED KING NAMED FmHA STATE DIRECTOR FOR PENNSYLVANIA.....J. Fred King, who served as Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration from May through November was named State Director of FmHA for Pennsylvania by Secretary Bergland on December 7.

As State Director he will be responsible for statewide direction of FmHA credit programs for farming, housing, community facilities and business-industrial development. The FmHA state office is located in Harrisburg and serves 28 county offices.

Following 13 years as a vocational agriculture teacher in Maryland and Pennsylvania, Fred joined ASCS as a farmer fieldman. Since coming into Washington in 1966, Fred has worked as an employee development officer in ASCS and as Chief of the Rural Minority Business Assistance Division in OEO.

SEX AND AGE DISCRIMINATION REVIEW.....In accordance with a Presidential directive, the Secretary has asked each agency and staff office to review its statutes, regulations, guidelines and policies to identify and eliminate any aspects that may tend to result in unequal treatment on the basis of sex. In addition, the Secretary has asked that the reviews include age discrimination as well, in view of the approaching effective date of the Age Discrimination Act prohibiting age discrimination in Federal programs after January 1, 1979. The results of the review will be reported to the Justice Department. It is expected that Agency Federal Womens Program Coordinators will be involved in the reviews. (Contact: William C. Payne, OEO, ext. 74806)

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE CHARGES.....Effective January 1, 1978, annual and sick leave may be charged in 15 minute increments where agencies and staff offices select this option. Agency and staff office heads must request clearance from the Director of Personnel prior to making this change. Annual and sick leave will continue to be transferrable in increments of one hour only, however, employees will be permitted to take fractional hours needed to even off the leave balance before transfer. (Contact: Verna Deane Brown, OP ext. 73185)

REVISED PERFORMANCE RATING FORM.....The AD-434, Performance Rating form, Revised May 1977, is now being issued by the National Finance Center. Performance ratings will no longer be scheduled on a Department-wide basis and each agency will determine the schedules that best meet its needs. There are two major changes on the form. The rater will identify the major activities in which the employee works, and will provide an approximation of the amount of time, with a rating, for each activity. The rating scale has been reduced from 9 points to 5.

It is expected that in the process of changing to a new rating schedule, some employees may be rated twice in a very short period of time while others may receive a rating two or three months later than usual. During the changeover, provisions have been made to accomodate a short rating period and to identify employees who are overdue ratings. These transition problems should be out of the way by April 1978.
(Contact: Bill Parent, OP, ext. 78721)

VENDOR'S PROTEST.....In the Burroughs et al protest against USDA's computer procurements for the Kansas City (KCCC) and New Orleans (NOCC) Computer Centers, the Comptroller General, in cases B-189752 and B-190222, held in favor of USDA. Award for the KCCC contract is scheduled to be made by January 10, 1978, and for NOCC by February 15, 1978. (Contact: R. Long, ADS, ext. 76275)

UNION REPRESENTATION.....The Assistant Secretary for Labor Management Relations, Department of Labor, dismissed the action in which AFGE claimed it was the representative of the New Orleans Computer Center.
(Contact: R. Long, ADS, ext. 76275)

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN.....Congratulations to USDA. The CFC is over the top with employee contributions reaching 101.6 percent of the goal. A total of \$460,801 was contributed; an average gift of \$49.32 from 85.9 percent of USDA employees.

The following agencies met or exceeded the dollar goals:

	%		%
AMS	101.8	OGSM	100.3
ARS	107.1	OMF	164.3
ASCS	103.8	OO	140.7
CSRS	131.6	OP	133.9
EMSC	124.1	P&SA	100.1
ERS	101.8	RDS	140.6
FAS	130.7	REA	101.9
FCS	111.4	SCS	100.0
FGIS	151.7	SEC	111.3
FNS	115.2	SRS	121.0
NAL	121.4	GS	306.0

Three agencies; FGIS, OO and SEC had 100% employee participation. The largest amount, \$72,514 was given by ARS, the agency with the most local employees. The top agency for size of average gift was OMF where all contributors averaged \$92.28. (Contact: R. R. Rhodes, ARS, ext. 73803)

SAVINGS BONDS PARTICIPATION.....The latest Savings Bonds report issued by NFC indicates a recent decline in employee participation in the Department. This report shows an overall participation rate of 69 percent, indicating a large number of cancellations and employee separations since the end of the 1977 Campaign. Individual agency reports are being distributed to Savings Bond Coordinators.

This year, a year-round Savings Bond Program has been initiated through the Office of Personnel. It is intended to promote participation among new employees and, when fully implemented, should have a strong, sustaining impact on the Department's rate of participation. Top management in each agency is encouraged to demonstrate support for the ongoing program being implemented through agency personnel offices.
(Contact: Frank Gearde, FNS, ext. 78974)

LEGISLATIVE ITEMS.....

...Rural Health - The Senate has agreed to the conference report on H. R. 8422, to provide for reimbursement for rural health clinic services under medicare and medicaid. The measure is now on the President's desk.

...Crop Insurance - The President has approved H. R. 9704, to increase by \$50 million the capital stock of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (Public Law 95-181).

...Social Security - The House has agreed to a conference with the Senate to resolve the differences between the two versions of the Social Security financing bill, H. R. 9346.

(Contract: Al Duran, OBPE, ext. 74654)

PRESIDENTIAL RECOGNITION.....President Carter has announced his intention to issue a letter of commendation to any Federal employee who, since January 1, 1977, has been recognized for a suggestion or achievement which saved at least \$5,000. Energy conservation actions are high on the list of subjects which may receive Presidential recognition. Other areas emphasized are reorganization, paperwork reduction, regulation reform, and zero-base budgeting. This program from the 1975-76 Cost Reduction Campaign in that it will be ongoing.

Recommendations received at the White House before January 10, 1978, will also be eligible for consideration for the Annual Presidential Management Improvement Awards. Agencies are urged to review all awards approved since January 1, 1977, and submit nominations for a PMI Award to the Director of Personnel no later than December 30, 1977. Specific details are in Personnel Bulletins No. 451-260 and 451-261. (Contact: Mae Paulsen, OP, ext. 75618)

BUDGET NEWS.....

...FY 1978 Supplemental - On December 6, the House accepted the conference report on the FY 1978 Supplemental Appropriations Bill. The Senate considered the conference report on December 7, but was unable to reach final agreement. The Bill is expected to be reconsidered by the Senate on the 15th or 19th of this month.

...Budget Allowances - The Department has received Presidential allowances for programs and review and consideration of matters for appeal are continuing. Agencies are now producing budget schedules and explanatory notes for presentation of the President's budget estimates to Congress. The President is scheduled to submit his budget to the Congress on January 23, 1978.

(Contact: Bob Sherman, OBPE, ext. 76176)

FLEXITIME AND ENERGY CONSERVATION.....The Department of Energy has stated that the adoption of flexitime may be an energy conserving action. The rationale is that, although a change to flexitime normally lengthens the hours for which a building remains open, the resulting increase in building energy consumption is more than offset by a decrease in vehicular energy consumption from reduced traffic congestion. DOE cautions, however, that this is valid only so long as the flexitime schedule does not result in a building being open longer than 11 hours per day. (Contact: Bill Saltsgaver, 00, ext. 77557)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCUREMENTS.....USDA administrative procurements (procurements exclusive of agricultural commodities) for FY 1977 totaled \$507,385,000; a 43% increase over FY 1976. FS and SCS accounted for over 90% of this gain.

Procurement of construction was \$168,724,000, an increase of 80% over the preceding year. Small businesses received 72% of total award dollars. (Contact: Dean Smith, 00, ext. 77527)